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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: A Short History of Agency Personnel Operations and Records Maintenance

SOURCES: Messrs. [REDACTED], Office of 25X1A9a  
Personnel.

1. 1947: In 1947 there was a Personnel Branch headed by a Personnel Director who reported to the Executive Director. The Personnel Director had the only appointment authority delegated by the head of the Agency (Director, CIG until 1 July 1947 and then Director, CIA). All the professional classification officers were in the Personnel Branch.

The Office of Special Operations branches (DD/P divisions today) had their own complete personnel files, including Personal History Statements. There were no PHS's in the Personnel Branch. The Notice of Personnel Action, SF 50 was written in OSO and signed by the Director of Personnel. Sixty percent of OSO funds were vouchered, forty percent unvouchered.

Although classification officers had position classification authority on paper, they were not permitted in OSO. Their classification review was limited to receiving an oral explanation of a job by an OSO personnel officer or a written certification by OSO that the incumbent was performing at the requested grade level. Mr. [REDACTED], who was then an OSO personnel officer, used to make such certifications; he says he did not have sufficient information to do the job properly.

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2. 1948: Ninety-five percent of the OSO personnel records were maintained in OSO branches. Mr. [REDACTED] kept records of his classification work for OSO but these were objected to by the OSO branches. Frequently, when he would send one of his file folders to a branch, it would be returned stripped of most of its papers.

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3. October 1949: A Special Support Staff (covert) was established under the Executive. The staff had three divisions: Covert Personnel, Procurement and Supply, and Special Funds. The counterpart overt staff was called Administrative Staff with Personnel, Services and Fiscal Divisions.

On personnel matters, the Chief, SSS reported to and was advised by the Personnel Director (William J. Kelly); on other matters he reported to the Executive [REDACTED]. In practice, this dual-headed personnel control was frequently replaced by direct control by the Executive.

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At this time, requests for covert personnel action were prepared in the OSO branches as memoranda to the SCS where a form 37-1 was prepared (later superseded by an overprinted SF-52) to serve as a notice of Personnel Action. The overt requests for personnel action were prepared on forms 37-3 (later replaced by SF-52) and sent to the Administrative Staff where the Notice of Personnel Action, SF-50 was prepared. Classification officers were now permitted to go into the OSO branches to obtain first hand information.

The Office of Special Operations and the Office of Policy Coordination (established in January 1949) were both primarily covert. The OPC group contained many former OSS personnel and believed in an administratively self-sufficient organization. Mr. [REDACTED] was OPC Personnel Officer. He managed a full covert personnel operation and maintained all the OPC personnel files (see memorandum of discussion with Mr. [REDACTED]; although, officially, he was supposed to have all the files, in fact he was never able to eliminate personnel files in the branches).

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OSO embarked on the same course of self-sufficiency but never managed to centralize the personnel files.

A reaction to this attempted OPC centralization followed and OPC area divisions hired personnel officers and officially set up their own personnel files. Later they prepared their own forms 37-1.

4. 1950 or 51: The SCS was abolished and the Office of Personnel was established with Mr. William J. Kelly as the Assistant Director for Personnel. The Office contained a Personnel Division, Overt and a Personnel Division, Covert. Classification for the Agency was consolidated in the new Office of Personnel.

Division personnel files remained in OSO and OPC. OSO set up promotion boards; OPC did not.

5. 1952: Physically, the OSO and OPC employees were combined.

6. 1956: The old OSO files are in RI/FI rather than the Personnel Office. The Official Personnel File is in the Office of Personnel but unofficial personnel files flourish throughout the Agency (see Personnel Records Survey Report, April 5, 1956).

Regulation [REDACTED] Personnel Records and Reports, published 2 March 1954 contains the following directions for maintenance of personnel records:

a. Policy: "Official personnel records" will be maintained by the Office of Personnel. "The Chiefs of the Major Components will control the maintenance of supplementary records on personnel underlining added under their jurisdiction. They will ensure that such records are limited to the minimum necessary for the initiation and recordation of personnel actions and effective employee utilization."

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b. Responsibilities: "Officials who are responsible for the initiation of personnel actions...are also responsible for furnishing records of official personnel information /underlining added/ concerning employees under their jurisdiction to the Office of Personnel for inclusion in the official personnel folder for the individual concerned."

c. Official Personnel Records:

(1) The Official Personnel File Folder shall be maintained by the Office of Personnel.

(2) "The Service Record Card (SF-7) is a summary record of Government employment designed for use in a central personnel office for control purposes." It shall be maintained by the Office of Personnel.

(3) "The Employee Record Card, OF-4b is a supplementary record very similar in content to SF-7 and differs mainly in its primary use: by operating components to provide a record of personnel data and actions. "It is the only supplementary record authorized /underlining added/ by the Office of Personnel which may be established by operating components."